

was repealed in 1976, subject to “valid, existing rights.”

This provision in the enrolled bill is objectionable because it is cumbersome, flawed, and duplicates the extensive public hearings conducted by the Department of the Interior over the last 4 years. In addition, the proposed commission excludes the Secretary of Defense, but military installations are among the Federal properties that would be affected by the recommendations of the commission. Furthermore, there is no assurance that the proposed commission would provide a balanced representation of views or proper public participation. Under the provision, the Secretary of the Interior can disapprove the commission’s recommendations, preventing their submission to the Congress under “fast-track” procedures in the House and Senate. I believe—and my Administration has stated—that a better approach would be for Interior to submit a legislative proposal to the Congress within 180 days to clarify R.S. 2477 claim issues permanently, with full congressional and public consideration.

The enrolled bill contains an objectionable provision that funds the Commission for the Advancement of Federal Law Enforcement. I agree with the Fraternal Order of Police and other national law enforcement organizations that certain activities of the Commission, such as evaluating the handling of specific investigative cases, could interfere with Federal law enforcement policy and operations. This type of oversight is most properly the role of Congress, not an unelected review board. If external views about law enforcement programs are needed, a better approach would be to fund the National Commission to Support Law Enforcement.

I also object to two other items in the bill. One reduces funding for the Ounce of Preven-

tion Council by roughly one-third. This reduction would substantially diminish the work of the Council in coordinating crime prevention efforts at the Federal level and assisting community efforts to make their neighborhoods safer. The Council is in the process of awarding \$1.8 million for grants to prevent youth substance abuse and of evaluating its existing grant programs. The Council has received over 300 applications from communities and community-based organizations from all across the country for these grants. In addition, the bill reduces funding for the Department of Defense Dual-Use Applications Program. That program helps to develop technologies used and tested by the cost-conscious commercial sector and to incorporate them into military systems. Reducing funding for this program would result in higher costs for future defense systems. The projects selected in this year’s competition will save the Department of Defense an estimated \$3 billion.

Finally, by including extraneous issues in this bill, the Republican leadership has also delayed necessary funding for maintaining military readiness. The Secretary of Defense has written the Congress detailing the potential disruption of military training.

I urge the Congress to remove these extraneous provisions and to send me a straightforward disaster relief bill that I can sign promptly, so that we can help hard-hit American families and businesses as they struggle to rebuild. Americans in need should not have to endure further delay.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 9, 1997.

Remarks on National Education Standards

June 10, 1997

Thank you very much. Let me say, first of all, I’m glad to be here with Pat Forgione, the Commissioner for the National Center for Educational Statistics. I thank him for the fine work that he has done. I thank the educators who are here, Linda Vieth, Lourdes Monegudo, and Sharon Simpson. I thank Secretary Riley for his

excellent work. And I want to thank all of those out in the audience who have done so much to make this day come to pass, those who were introduced, the leaders of the NEA and the AFT and the other education groups who are here. All of you, thank you very much for being here.

Today is a good day for American education. Today we announce the new results from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study for fourth graders, showing that America's fourth graders are performing above the national average in math and science. In fact, in science they are doing very well, indeed. According to this report, just issued today, our fourth graders rank second in the world in the Third International Math and Science Tests, just behind Korea. We are making great strides. We've built a solid foundation in our national effort to establish standards of excellence in education.

In 1989 and 1990, when I was a Governor, I worked with the other Governors and the White House and the Department of Education to establish national education goals. I remember the night we spent staying up all night at the University of Virginia, asking ourselves whether we should have a goal in math and science and, if so, what should it be. You remember, don't you? You were there. We were up all night long, and people said to me, "There's no way in the world we can have a goal that we should be first in the world of math and science because we have a more diverse population, we have more poor children, we don't have uniformity of"—so I remember looking at the person who made the argument—it was a perfectly sane and rational argument—I said, "Well, what do you want me to say, we're going to be third in the world in math and science? That's our goal? We'll be fourth? We'll be eighth?" So we decided we would embrace the goal that we would be first.

These fourth grade examinations proved that if our educators, our parents, our schools, the rest of us in a supporting role, if we all do the right thing, that our children can achieve if we give them the chance to do it and if we have high expectations for them. So again, I want to say, I thank the educators who are here. And I think that if you look at where we were—just in 1991, there was a test similar to the TIMSS test in which our fourth graders were below average in math, above average in science, but nowhere near where they are today. So this shows you what can happen in a few short years if people are working together for the right things for our children and the future of this country.

So I just want to say again to all those who were serving with me, the Republicans and Democrats alike who were Governors back then,

I still think we did the right thing, and now we have to do what it takes to make sure we meet the goal. We have to have the conviction that every child in America can learn. And we have to know that this report proves that we don't have to settle for second class expectations or second class goals.

Now, we also have to remember that we've got a long way to go. Last November, when Secretary Riley and Commissioner Forgiione released the first results from the eighth grade test, we found that we were above the international average in science but still below the international average in mathematics. That is why I have asked us to begin not just participating in the TIMSS test with a few thousand of our students but to voluntarily embrace national standards beginning with reading and mathematics and begin with examinations that would embrace every child in America with fourth grade reading and eighth grade math by 1999.

Since I issued that call, six States—education leaders or Governors—in Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, California, West Virginia, and Massachusetts, along with the Department of Defense schools, have adopted this plan of embracing national standards and agreeing to participate in the testing program. I'm pleased to announce today that the State of Kentucky is joining the national standards movement, becoming the sixth State to agree to participate in the examinations. And I want to especially thank Governor Paul Patton, who has been a national leader in education, for joining in this endeavor.

The results today give us a roadmap to higher performance. In no other country in the world did performance in math drop from above average in fourth grade to below average in eighth grade. That didn't happen anywhere else, which means that we are doing a very good job in the early grades but we've got a lot more work to do in the later ones. We know parents have to remain involved in their children's education as they move through schools, not withdraw when their children reach adolescence. We know our curriculum will have to be more focused and more demanding. We know we'll have to hold all of our students to higher standards as they grow older and measure the schools and the students against the standards.

As the school year comes to a close, I want to thank the many thousands of parents and

teachers, principals who have done the hard work necessary to achieve these positive results. They have told us over and over and over again that if we can redouble our efforts, especially now in middle school and high schools, we can meet our goals of national excellence. Bipartisan progress on education shows what we can accomplish here in Washington, too, when we reach across party lines, to balance the budget but to invest more in the education of our young people as well as our adults who need more access to education.

So let me just say, before I go on to make one or two more points, there are a lot of people who never believed the United States children would score in the top two in the world on any of these international tests. And now they know that they were wrong and they underestimated our children, underestimated our teachers, underestimated our schools, underestimated our parents. But let's not kid ourselves. We are still nowhere near where we need to be in these other areas, and all this fourth grade test does is to show us that we can be the best in the world if we simply believe it and then organize ourselves to achieve it.

This ought to be a clear challenge to every single State that has not yet come forward to agree to participate in the national standards movement and the test in 1999 that they ought to do it. We don't have to hide anymore. We don't have to be afraid of the results anymore. We're not trying to punish anybody. We're trying to lift the children of this country up, and the TIMSS test proves that they will lift themselves up if we who are adults and in charge of their future do what we ought to do to give them a chance to do it. And I hope all of you will take that message out across the country now.

Let me finally say that whether we in the National Government continue to do our part for education depends upon our good faith in implementing the budget agreement that overwhelming majorities of both parties have voted for and, specifically, what we do with the tax portion of the agreement, which overwhelming majorities agree would be used to help working families to pay for education, to buy and sell a home, to raise their children. That is fair to all Americans.

Yesterday the Republican majority on the House Ways and Means Committee released their plan to fill in the details of the tax cut

agreed to by the Congress and by me. I have reviewed this plan, and I believe that in its present form, it does not meet the tests that I would hold myself to: one, being faithful to the budget agreement; second, having a tax cut that will grow the economy; third, having a tax cut that is fair to middle class families; and fourth, having a tax cut that genuinely helps to increase the quality and volume of education in America today for people of all ages. I do not believe it meets those tests for the following reasons.

Number one, it falls \$13 billion short in the amount of higher education tax cuts specifically agreed to in the balanced budget agreement. We agreed to roughly \$35 billion. You might say that \$34 billion is roughly \$35 billion, but \$22 billion is not—not even roughly \$35 billion—[*laughter*]*—and if that were a question in the fourth grade TIMSS test, I'm quite sure what the answer would be. [Laughter]*

Second, it shortchanges those in the work force who want to gain new skills and those who want to go on to community colleges. Those who go to less expensive schools, like community colleges, would have the HOPE scholarship I proposed, specifically agreed to in the budget agreement, cut in half by the House plan.

Third, the plan falls short for working families in other ways. I favor a \$500-per-child tax credit. We have people favoring the \$500-per-child tax credit all the way from the most liberal coalitions in the Democratic caucus to the Christian Coalition. But I want to make it even more fair. I think it ought to be refundable, so it's fair to working parents with lower incomes. Instead, the Republican plan would deny the full child tax credit to millions of the hardest pressed working families simply because it is not refundable. And they would deduct the availability of the child's tax credit from the earned-income tax credit that lower income working families already earn.

Moreover, and unbelievably to me, they would reduce tax benefits to working families where both the father and the mother are working and paying for child care and getting some credit for that. They want to deduct the child tax credit from the credit people already get to pay for child care, apparently designed to make it more difficult for people who are parents to work outside the home. I think most working families will tell you, it's hard enough

already; what we'd like is a little help raising our children. I do not believe we should discriminate against parents who are working and raising their children in the availability of the children's tax credit.

In short, the tax plan cuts in half the tax cuts for those who go to community college. It shortchanges 6 million families who are already in the work force and having to pay for their child care. That does not meet the standards of fairness to families and promotion of education, nor do I believe it is consistent with the budget agreement. So I hope that the House Democrats and Republicans and the Senate Democrats and Republicans will work with us to meet those tests.

Finally, let me just say one other thing. The people of the Dakotas and Minnesota earned the great compassion and concern of all Americans because of what they went through this year. We've worked hard to help them stave off the worst, to get their communities back together, to rebuild. It has been 80 days since I forwarded to Congress my request for disaster relief to allow the process of recovery to begin. Instead of giving me a disaster relief bill, the

congressional majority insisted on weighing it down with a political wish list. In the name of the people who have had to face the floods, in the name of the families who suffered and need their help now, I ask the majority to put aside the political games, to set aside the political wish list—we can negotiate on all this later—and instead just send me a straightforward disaster relief bill. Again, I believe if this were a question on an elementary school exam, 90 percent of the fourth graders in America would say, do the right thing, and have your political arguments later.

So as we celebrate today, let's do the right thing and resolve that we're not going to stop until we get those TIMSS tests and we're first in the world at the 4th grade level, at the 8th grade level, at the 12th grade level. Our fourth graders have proved that we can do it. We dare not let them and the other children of this country down.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:24 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Paul E. Patton of Kentucky.

Remarks at the Juvenile Justice Conference June 11, 1997

Thank you very much, Attorney General Reno, Ray Kelly, Father O'Donovan. Let me say to my good friend Father O'Donovan, I never know when I come to Georgetown whether being introduced as the university's most well-known alumnus will be a liability or an asset. It just depends on what month I come, I think. When Ray Kelly said he considered the Jesuits the Marine Corps of the Catholic Church, I never really thought of that. And then he went through that litany, you know, "the few, the proud" and all that, I was thinking about the ones who taught me in class. I was thinking, "the few, the proud, the brutal." [Laughter] But brilliantly brutal.

I love this place, and I thank Father O'Donovan for having us here at the conference. I also want to thank the Attorney General and Ray Kelly for the truly unprecedented partnership that they have established with local law

enforcement officials and others who are interested in the safety of our streets and our children throughout the United States. We have here representatives of the Fraternal Order of Police, of the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the law enforcement community, a lot of other people who just work with young people and try to help give them something to say yes to.

I'm glad to see our friend Jim Brady here. The country owes a lot of thanks to Jim and to Sarah, for with courage and persistence and good humor, they have saved a lot of lives with the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, and others.

We are here today to talk about what we can do together to build safer neighborhoods and stronger neighborhoods as part of the preparation of America for a new century. Today I want to talk about violent youth gangs and